

State of Arkansas
93rd General Assembly
Regular Session, 2021

As Engrossed: H3/29/21

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1794

By: Representatives Vaught, M. Gray

By: Senator D. Wallace

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO CREATE THE LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE PATHWAY
PILOT PROGRAM; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO CREATE THE LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE
PATHWAY PILOT PROGRAM; AND TO DECLARE AN
EMERGENCY.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 16, Subchapter 10, is amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

6-16-1005. Licensed Practical Nurse Pathway Pilot Program.

(a) There is created the Licensed Practical Nurse Pathway Pilot Program.

(b) By the 2022-2023 school year, the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, in consultation with the Division of Higher Education, shall establish and implement the program by which a public school student enrolled in grades nine through twelve (9-12) in a public school or open-enrollment public charter school may enroll in undergraduate courses required to obtain a diploma or certificate of completion as a licensed practical nurse by the date on which the public school student graduates or within a reasonable frame of time after the public school student graduates.

(c) The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education shall work with the following entities without limitation to establish and implement the



program as required under subsection (b) of this section:

- (1) The Department of Health;
- (2) The Division of Higher Education;
- (3) The Arkansas State Board of Nursing;
- (4) The Office of Skills Development; and
- (5) Any other individual or entity involved in the practice of

nursing and nursing education programs.

(d)(1) A public school district or open-enrollment public charter school shall submit to the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education:

(A) An application to participate in the program; and

(B) The name of the institution of higher education that has indicated its willingness to partner with the public school district or open-enrollment public charter school to implement the program in the public school district or open-enrollment public charter school.

(2) A public school district may apply on behalf of a single public school within the public school district.

(3) A public school or open-enrollment public charter school may partner with a secondary vocational center to implement the program under this section.

(e) In selecting participants, the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education shall:

(1) Consider qualified applicants from various locations and of various sizes and demographics; and

(2) Consult with entities listed under subsection (c) of this section.

(f) The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, in consultation with the Division of Higher Education, shall develop:

(1) An application form, schedule, and procedure by which a public school district or open-enrollment public charter school may apply to participate in the program;

(2) Criteria to use in selecting public school districts and open-enrollment public charter schools to participate in the program; and

(3) A policy clarifying that an institution of higher education with which a public school district or open-enrollment public charter school is partnered shall exercise oversight and control of the academic aspects of the program, including without limitation faculty selection, curricula, and

evaluation processes.

SECTION 2. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that the ongoing public health emergency has increased the strain on the state's public health system; that the shortage of nurses in the state has been emphasized by the ongoing public health emergency; and that this act is immediately necessary in order to create accelerated and streamlined opportunities by which young people can obtain licensed practical nursing degrees and enter the workforce earlier. Therefore, an emergency is declared to exist, and this act being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health, and safety shall become effective on:

(1) The date of its approval by the Governor;

(2) If the bill is neither approved nor vetoed by the Governor, the expiration of the period of time during which the Governor may veto the bill; or

(3) If the bill is vetoed by the Governor and the veto is overridden, the date the last house overrides the veto.

/s/Vaught

APPROVED: 4/19/21